

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 5, 11-13, 15-16, 19, 21-22, 24-27, 30, and 33-34 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 13, and 27 being the independent claims. Claims 2, 7- 9, 14, and 28 were previously cancelled. Claims 3-4, 6, 10, 17-18, 20, 23, 28-29, and 31-32 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. New claims 33 and 34 are sought to be added. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Claim Objections

Applicants have amended claims 15 and 16 to correct the informalities identified by the Examiner.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's indication that he has withdrawn his rejection of claims 27-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, in light of Applicants' corrective amendments thereto set forth in the Reply filed on October 15, 2006.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's indication that he has withdrawn his rejection of claims 1, 4, 6, 13, 15, 18, 20, 29, 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in light of Applicants' remarks set forth in the Reply filed on October 15, 2006.

In the present Office Action, however, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-6, 11, 12, 18, 20, and 21-24 as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph on new and additional grounds. Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments address or render moot the Examiner's rejections.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Dresti et al.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-5, 10-13, 15-19, 21-26, 27, 29, 31, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0103088 to Dresti et al. ("Dresti"). For the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection.

In concluding that the foregoing claims are not patentable under Section 102(e) as being anticipated by Dresti, the Examiner relies chiefly on the screen device wheel depicted in Figure 11 and accompanying text. According to the Examiner, the screen device wheel in Dresti provides a set of controllable devices. Upon selection of any one of such devices, the user is presented with another set of control options for that selected device. The Examiner also places emphasis on Dresti's teachings regarding the set-up process for programming a "macro" for one-button activation of a desired activity, such as "watch movies." The Examiner contends that when a macro activity has been

programmed and the user wishes to edit that activity, the user would necessarily be able to identify any devices involved in the activity, including the first component and any affiliate components.

Whether or not the foregoing assertions by the Examiner are true, they miss the point of Applicants' invention and the reasons why that invention is unique. Applicants' invention is directed to a graphic user interface (GUI) for simplifying the control of multiple consumer electronic devices. To facilitate such simplified control, Applicants' GUI displays a first set of control objects for controlling a consumer electronic device selected by the user. Activating a control object populates the GUI with control options associated with the selected device and a second set of control objects that are displayed concurrently with the control options associated with the selected device. The second set of control objects represent other affiliated consumer electronic devices that are capable of providing input to the selected device.

This unique type of "double set" or "multiple set" GUI allows for simpler navigation of control screens because the user at all time is aware of other affiliated devices and can access control of such devices without returning to some central menu in the chain of control screens. This is not at all taught or suggested by Dresti. To the contrary, Dresti's device-wheel GUI, like most traditional control schemes, presents only one set of controllable devices that can be selected by the user. Once a device is selected, Dresti's GUI only displays control options for the selected device, and does not concurrently display on the same GUI another set of devices that can provide input to the selected device. Consequently, in order for a user in Dresti to determine what other devices are connected to the selected device and to activate such affiliated devices, the

user would have to physically exit out of the control GUI for the device currently in operation and navigate to another GUI that displays such other devices. Such “screen flipping” can be extremely cumbersome and confusing, and is one of the deficiencies in traditional control schemes that Applicants’ intended to obviate through the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that Dresti does not render pending claims 1, 5, 11-13, 15-16, 19, 21-22, 24-27, 30, and 33-34 unpatentable under Section 102(e).

Hasha et al.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-6, 13, 15, 17-20, 27, 29, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,734,879 to Hasha et al. (“Hasha”). For the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejection.

In support of his rejection, the Examiner relies principally on the description relating to the main display (illustrated in Figure 2) of Hasha. According to the Examiner, when the user selects a menu button on the main display (e.g., audio/video), the user is presented with control options relating to that selection (e.g., movie, TV channels, radio stations, etc.). Even assuming that the Examiner’s reading of Hasha is correct, Hasha nonetheless suffers from the same shortcoming as Dresti in that it fails to teach or suggest “a first set of control objects for selecting a system component within a controlled environment, wherein activation of a control object from said first set denotes said selected system component and populates the user interface with control options . . .

[and] a second set of control objects, which are displayed concurrently with said control options associated with said selected system component, representing affiliate system components capable of providing an input to said selected system component," as recited in independent claim 1. Similarly, Hasha fails to teach or suggest "presenting, on a user interface, a first set of control objects, each object being associated with one or more system components within the controlled environment . . . [and] presenting, on said user interface concurrently with said control options associated with said selected system component, a second set of control objects representing affiliate systems components capable of providing an input to the selected system component," as recited in independent claim 13. Finally, by the same token, Hasha does not teach or suggest "first computer readable program code means for presenting, on a user interface, a first set of control objects, each object being associated with one or more system components within the controlled environment . . . [and] third computer readable program code means for populating said user interface with control options for the selected system component . . . [and] fifth computer readable program code means for presenting, on said user interface concurrently with said control options associated with the selected system component, a second set of control objects representing affiliate system components capable of providing an input to the selected system component," as recited in independent claim 27.

As in *Dresti*, once the user in Hasha makes a functionality selection and advances to the next control screen, he or she must navigate out of that screen to another screen in order to access different functionality. Thus, after having selected "movies" and having been presented with a play list of available movies, the user must then return to one or

more higher-level screens elsewhere in the menu path to determine what other device-driven functionality is available and to control such other devices. This is precisely the kind of hardship that Applicants' invention is designed to obviate.

Accordingly, like Dresti, Hasha does not render pending claims 1, 5, 11-13, 15-16, 19, 21-22, 24-27, 30, and 33-34 unpatentable under Section 102(e).

Conclusion

Because neither Dresti nor Hasha teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 13 and 27, as explained above, these claims cannot be anticipated by either of those references. The claims that depend from independent claims 1, 13, and 27, are likewise not anticipated by either Dresti or Hasha for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 5, 11-13, 15-16, 19, 21-22, 24-27, 30, and 33-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

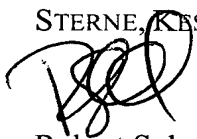
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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